

REMARKS

The present application was filed on September 12, 2003 with claims 1 through 29. Claims 30-35 were added in the Voluntary Amendment dated October 3, 2007. Claims 1 through 35 are presently pending in the above-identified patent application. Claims 1, 20, and 29 are proposed to be amended herein.

In the present Office Action, the Examiner objected to the amendment filed on October 3, 2007 under 35 U.S.C. §132(a) because it introduces new matter into the disclosure and rejected claims 30-35 under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The Examiner rejected claims 1-35 under 35 U.S.C. §101 for nonstatutory subject matter, and rejected claims 1-17, 20-26, and 29-35 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Floratos, "DELPHI: A Pattern-based Method for Detecting Sequence Similarity."

Formal Objections

The Examiner objected to the amendment filed on October 3, 2007 under 35 U.S.C. §132(a) because it introduces new matter into the disclosure. In particular, the Examiner asserts that, by crossing out the word "abstract," the Applicant is introducing problems that are both "abstract" and other domains as well (page 3, lines 16-26). The Examiner asserts that pages 2-3 describe applications which are not based in an "abstract problem" solving domain which was presented in the original specification.

Applicants note that the original disclosure teaches that "the abstract problem of discovering permutation patterns is formed as a discovery problem." (Page 4, lines 7-10) The adjective "abstract" referred to the "problem of discovering permutation patterns." Contrary to the Examiner's assertions, the adjective "abstract" did *not* refer to the domains to which the discovery of permutation patterns applied. A person of ordinary skill in the art would recognize that the claimed invention is applicable to many domains, including those cited by the Examiner (as described on pages 2-3).

Section 112 Rejections

Claims 30-35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Regarding claims 31, 33, and 35, the Examiner notes that these claims recite that the relationship is functional, and asserts that there is no

definition of "functional relationship" and that, using the excepted definition of a function, the relationship is not functional. Regarding claims 30, 32, and 34, the Examiner notes that these claims recite that the relationship is structural, and asserts that the word "structural" is not recited within the specification and is not a common term within the art.

5 Applicants maintain that the terms "functional relationship" and "structural relationship" are well understood by a person of ordinary skill in the art. For example, the terms "structural" or "functional" are a rationale for looking at permutation patterns of, for instance, genes, i.e., genes that appear in a completely different order. These genes may have structural and/or functional relations, although they may appear in different orders in the chromosomes

10 Section 101 Rejections

Claims 1-35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. In particular, the Examiner asserts that the invention has not been limited to a substantial practical application and that the claims describe preemption. The Examiner asserts that the phrase "utilization in an application" means "utilization in any
15 application" thus disclosing preemption and that "characters" are not limited to a specific application thus disclosing preemption.

In the Response to Arguments section of the present Office Action, the Examiner asserts that the statement "the existence of additional unknown uses for the invention has no relevance to the validity of the claims under section 101" is contrary to MPEP 2106 (emphasis
20 added). In the Examiner's Answer dated August 3, 2007, the Examiner asserted that the claims fail to provide a tangible result, and notes that there must be a practical application. The Examiner asserted that 1) the Appellant admits to unknown uses for the invention; 2) relies on "Background" to supply a practical application of the invention; and 3) admits (in paragraph 0019) that the invention is an 'abstract problem.'

25 Regarding the Examiner's assertion that the statement is contrary to MPEP 2106, Applicants find no comments in MPEP 2106 regarding "unknown uses" for an invention *that are in addition to the disclosed uses of an invention*. Applicants note that any invention may have, in addition to the known uses, other unknown uses.

Regarding the Examiner's assertion that the Applicant admits to unknown uses
30 for the invention, Applicants note that, as described below, the disclosure clearly identifies

practical applications of the invention. The existence of additional unknown uses for the invention has no relevance to the validity of the claims under section 101. In addition, independent claims 1, 20, and 29 have been amended to require *providing said permutation patterns for utilization in an application that processes co-located elements discovered in said input string and that processes a relationship between groups of said characters identified by said permutation patterns*. Applicants maintain that this amendment limits the claims to a practical application.

Regarding the Examiner's assertion that the Applicant relies on "Background" to supply a practical application of the invention, please note that the specification has also been amended to include the practical application(s), as disclosed in the "Background" section, in the "Detailed Description" section. Contrary to the Examiner's assertion, the cited amendment places the description of a gene analysis application in the Detailed Description section of the application and therefore provides guidance for an exemplary practical application of at least one aspect of the present invention.

Regarding the Examiner's assertion that the Applicant admits (in paragraph 0019) that the invention is an 'abstract problem,' Applicants note that the term "abstract" was used in a technical sense, and *not* as a legal admission in the context of statutory subject matter. In any case, the specification has been amended to change "abstract problem" to "problem" in paragraph 0019. In addition, as noted above, the adjective "abstract" did *not* refer to the domains to which the discovery of permutation patterns applied.

Finally, as previously noted, the Supreme Court has stated that the "[t]ransformation and reduction of an article 'to a different state or thing' is the clue to patentability of a process claim." *Gottshalk v. Benson*, 409 U.S. 63, 70, 175 U.S.P.Q. (BNA) 676 (1972). In other words, claims that require some kind of transformation of subject matter, which has been held to include intangible subject matter, such as data or signals, that are representative of or constitute physical activity or objects have been held to comply with Section 101. *See, for example, In re Warmerdam*, 31 U.S.P.Q.2d (BNA) 1754, 1759 n.5 (Fed. Cir. 1994) or *In re Schrader*, 22 F.3d 290, 295, 30 U.S.P.Q.2d (BNA) 1455, 1459 n.12 (Fed. Cir. 1994).

Thus, as expressly set forth in each of the independent claims, the claimed methods or system describe discovering permutation patterns from an input string having a

plurality of characters, each character being from an alphabet, and transform the input string to permutation patterns. This transformation to permutation patterns provides a useful, concrete and tangible result. For example, the Background and Detailed Description sections of the present disclosure describe how such permutation patterns are utilized in medical applications related to genes and proteins. Thus, contrary to the Examiner's assertion that no function or application has been stated for the invention, Applicants note that the Background and Detailed Description sections of the present disclosure describe how such permutation patterns are utilized in medical applications related to genes and proteins (see, page 1, line 12, to page 2, line 20). The final result of the cited claims, i.e., permutation patterns, are useful, concrete and tangible results.

Applicants submit that each of claims 1-29 are in full compliance with 35 U.S.C. §101, and accordingly, respectfully request that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §101 be withdrawn.

Independent Claims 1, 20 and 29

Independent claims 1, 20, and 29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Floratos. Regarding claim 1, the Examiner asserts that Floratos teaches "using changes in the names to determine the permutation patterns" (page 457, C1: 26-43).

Applicants note that Floratos is directed to a different problem than the present disclosure. Floratos is directed to "identifying *sequence similarity* between a query sequence and a database of proteins." (Page 455, first paragraph; emphasis added.) Floratos searches for an *ordered sequence in a string*. The claims of the present disclosure are directed to *discovering permutation patterns*. As would be apparent to a person of ordinary skill in the art, permutation patterns indicate that the patterns are related to a *non-ordered set of characters*. For instance, dictionary.com teaches that the permutations of (1,2,3) are (1,2,3) (2,3,1) (3,1,2) (3,2,1) (1,3,2) (2,1,3). Independent claims 1, 20, and 29 require using changes in the names to determine the *permutation patterns*.

Thus, Floratos does not disclose or suggest using changes in the names to determine the permutation patterns, as required by independent claims 1, 20, and 29.

Dependent Claims 2-19, 21-28 and 30-35

Dependent claims 2-17, 21-26, and 30-35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

as being anticipated by Floratos.

Claims 2-19 and 30-31, claims 21-28 and 32-33, and claims 34-35 are dependent on claims 1, 20, and 29, respectively, and are therefore patentably distinguished over Floratos because of their dependency from amended independent claims 1, 20, and 29 for the reasons set forth above, as well as other elements these claims add in combination to their base claim.

All of the pending claims, i.e., claims 1-35, are in condition for allowance and such favorable action is earnestly solicited.

If any outstanding issues remain, or if the Examiner has any further suggestions for expediting allowance of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below.

The Examiner's attention to this matter is appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,

/Kevin M. Mason/

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